

A
A
0
0
0
3
8
1
1
8
6
6



THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO LIBRARY



THE LIBRARY
OF
THE UNIVERSITY
OF CALIFORNIA
LOS ANGELES

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2008 with funding from
Microsoft Corporation

Land of the Umboridza
Carina Sylva -

Black Heart -
Hecklaa of team -

— Sundial -
— Auntie Robson -

PRO PATRIA.

PRO PATRIA AND OTHER POEMS.

BY
B. PAUL NEUMAN,

Author of
"The Greatness of Josiah Porlick, Etc."

PUBLISHED BY S. C. BROWN LANGHAM
& CO.. LTD., AND PRINTED BY THE
LANTHORN PRESS, 1905.

TO MY FRIEND
ALFRED EAST.

CONTENTS.

PR
5103
N 381

PAGE

Pro Patria	7
The Song of the Vine	9
The Good Place	13
The Children of the Pale... ..	14
A Ballad of the Caves of Porth... ..	15
The Heavenly Lover	18
Hector Unburied	23
*The Man Who Fought His Way in	27
A Hymn of Death... ..	29
The Lepers	31
Stevenson of the Letters	33
Robert Browning	34
Cecil Rhodes	35
Isolation	36
The Fools of Sight	37
Chrysanthemums	38
The Voice of the Mountains	39
The Voice of the Sea	40
The Musician	41
The Painter	42
The Last Ride	43
The Old Sinner	44
Holidays	45
Sea Birds	46
*The Pariah... ..	47
The Spirit of Beauty	48
A Christmas Carol... ..	49
In Days of War	
Prologue—The True England	50
The Graves of Magersfontein	51
Private Joseph Hinton	52
"Killed"	53
Vox Militantis	54
The Fever-Graves	55
The Swallows	56
The Two Mothers	57
The Two Armies... ..	58
Epilogue—The Shrine of the War-God	59
Oblivion	60
Our Lady of Empire	61
*The Children's Walk	62

937074

CONTENTS—continued.

	PAGE
To Nellie and Mabel	63
In Memory of a Child	64
Vale	65
Little Lil	66
Child Thoughts	69
No-You-Don't, and Yes-You-May... ..	70
A City Child	72
A Little Girl Dying	74
Death and the Boy	75
The Angels' Wrath	76
The Forest Life	77
Hawarden	81
On the Death of Twin Brothers	82

*The pieces marked with an asterisk have appeared in a volume of stories entitled
The Interpreter's House, which has been for some years out of print.

PRO PATRIA.

Land of the white cliff and the circling ocean,
Land of the strong, the valiant and the free,
Well may thy proud sons with their hearts' devotion
Seek to repay the debt they owe to thee.

Thou givest them health, the muscle and the vigour,
The steady poise of body and of mind,
The heart that chills not 'neath an Arctic rigour,
Nor droops before the scorching desert wind.

Thou givest them fame, a thousand memories leaping
Into the light whene'er thy name is spoken,
Thy heroes from their graven marbles keeping
Their faithful watch o'er thee and thine, unbroken.

Thou givest them rugged honesty unbending,
The heart of honour and the lip of truth,
Quick-answering impulse, freely, gladly spending
The strength of manhood with the zeal of youth.

A noble heritage ! and I might claim it,
Whose life within thy very heart awoke,
But yet the prayer, whenever I would frame it,
Died on my lips before the words outbroke.

Though kin of mine are lying where the grasses
Bow to the West wind by the Avon's side,
And daily o'er their graves the shadow passes
Of that fair church where Shakespeare's bones abide.

For far away beyond the waste of waters
There lies another, a forsaken land,
A land that mourns her exiled sons and daughters,
Whose graves are strewn on every alien strand.

A land of splendour, but of desolation,
Of glory, but a glory passed away,
Her hill-sides peopled with a buried nation,
Her fruitful plains the lawless stranger's prey.

Yet dearer even than the hills and valleys,
That wear the mantle of our English green,
By whose glad ways the mountain brooklet sallies,
Are those far heights that I have never seen.

White Hermon glistening in the morning glory,
Dark Sinai with its single cypress tree,
Green Tabor, and that rugged promontory
Whence Carmel frowns upon the laughing sea.

This is the land of hope without fruition,
Of promises no welcorne years fulfil,
While bound upon their weary pilgrim mission
The heirs of promise lack their birthright still.

Yet not the whole, for hope remains undying,
And such the hopes that gather round thy name,
Dear land, it were indeed a new denying,
To set before thee, beauty, wealth, or fame.

A little longer, and the habitations
Of exile shall re-echo with thy call,
"Return, my children, from among the nations,
Forget the years of banishment and thrall!"

Then shall the footsteps of the sons of Kedar
Cease from the silent wastes of Gilead,
No ruthless hand shall raze the oak and cedar
Wherewith its swelling uplands once were clad.

No longer shall the thief and the marauder
The peaceful tillers of the soil molest,
But from rough Argob on the eastern border
To sea-washed Jaffa, all the land shall rest.

Land of the prophets, in the prophet's vision
Thy future glory far transcends thy woes,
And soon, in spite of hatred and derision,
Thy wilderness shall blossom like the rose.

THE SONG OF THE VINE.

Dreary in the purlieus of the city
Stands the court wherein the ancient houses
Lean like tottering drunkards one towards the other.

Overhead the mighty orb of splendour
Striding pitiless across the heavens,
Not a cloud to veil him, Lord of the Ascendant.

Grimy are the cobbles of the courtyard,
Black the buildings with the dirt of ages,
Keen the nauseating odours of corruption.

In the attic of the craziest dwelling,
Where the broken pane lets in the foulness,
Stand, and sit, and squat, the sweater and the sweated.

Hour by hour they toil as once in Egypt,
"Ah," you say, "No Moses now, to whisper
Freedom! and the land that flows with milk and honey."

Stay; in yonder corner by the window
Sits the dark-eyed, pale, black-bearded greener
Whom the Gentile boys have nicknamed 'Barmy Judas.'

He, a Moses too, but bred in Vilna,
Poorest of the poor and very sickly,
Yet his grandsire—so the story runs—a Rabbi.

And to him the other slaves of Mammon
Pay such homage as their straits allow them,
Asking only in return one cherished favour.

When the needle stops awhile for supper,
First they push the jug to him, their poet,
Coaxing, "Sing us once again that song thou knowest."

"Which?" he asks, as if in truth he knew not,
Then he shuts his eyes, and swaying gently,
Croons the song Halevy taught him in his slumber.

*O vine, vine, vine,
Beautiful, fruitful vine,
Sing of the vine with the thousand branches!*

The seed was flung when the world was young,
But no man marked it lie,
For it fell on the sod where the cattle trod,
Withered, and hard, and dry.
Then a wind arose in the land
And covered it over with sand,
And the dews of heaven were fain
To rest on that spot, and the rain,
And the seed slept safe and sound
Within the ground.

Was it touch or word? For something stirred
In the heart of the buried seed,
And out of the gloom of her dreary tomb
Like a dungeon-captive freed,
Lifting her hands on high
For light, and the sun, and the sky,
Apparelled in the sheen
Of delicate, virginal green,
Like a jewel from the mine,
Uprose the vine.

Now while the shoot was tender of root,
And only a handbreadth high,
The Lord of the land as the paths He scanned,
Marked it with loving eye.
"Little wild vine," He said,
"Thou shall yet lift up thy head,
"And breathe a perfumed air
"In a garden large and fair,
"In a rich and fertile ground
"Where springs abound."

In the burning South, the land of drouth,
Is the garden, Heart's Delight,
But fed by rills from the ancient hills,
It smiles in the sun's despite.
Its gates are open wide,
One on the restless tide,
One on the hills that frown
From under their snowy crown,
Two look out on the sand
Of desert land.

There night and day, the soft winds play,
There cooling shadows fall,
There, long years through, the wilding grew
Till she waxed both strong and tall.
Her roots spread far and wide,
She lifted her head in pride,
Under her gracious shade
The children laughed and played,
And from each spreading shoot
Hung purple fruit.

*O vine, vine, vine,
O for the worm that pierced.
The roots of the vine with the thousand branches!*

Now far and wide, on every side,
The vine had gathered fame,
When one black night to Heart's Delight
An evil creature came,
A noisome, creeping thing,
Armed with a cruel sting,
The gardeners marked it not
Invade the sacred spot,
Yet all too soon they found
Death in the ground.

Ah, woe is me ! for who could see
Such piteous wreck nor mourn ?
The leafy crown all sere and brown,
Its strength and beauty shorn,
Ay, even Heart's Delight,
Itself, a sorry sight,
Its walls of square-hewn stone
Utterly overthrown,
While thorn and sand o'erspread
Path, border, bed.

*O vine, vine, vine,
Barren and withered vine,
Is she dead, the vine with the thousand branches?*

Nay this I tell, for I know it well,
The vine that ye thought was dead,
In the heart of her there is life astir,
Again she shall lift her head.

Through thorn and briar and bush
The slender stem shall push,
After the kindly sun
The eager tendrils run,
And purple clusters pour
Their wine once more.

Then shall we who have longed to see
The day of her coming forth,
Raise the song of the glad and strong,
As we march from the dreary North,
Back to the land we love,
With the heart of the homing dove,
The land of the mountain snows,
Of cedar, lily, and rose,
Of rivers and water springs,
And all good things.

Here he pauses, eager voices crying ;
"It is well ; enough ; sing not the last one."

But he frowns, and shakes his head, and sings the louder

Halevy spoke, in the vision that broke
On my sleep that Sabbath night,
The nations too, shall join with the Jew
And come unto Heart's Delight.
Its walls shall be built again,
And after the latter rain
The flowers shall spring once more,
And the oak and sycamore.
Its gates shall be opened wide
As of old, on every side,
And, like brethren, hand in hand,
Shall they who have hated, stand,
And share the cup of festal wine
Under the shade of the risen vine.

O vine, vine, vine,

Sing of the day of the vine,

And the day of the Lord of the vineyard !

THE GOOD PLACE.*

On the slope of the hill it lies,
Peaceful under the autumn skies,
And over every narrow grave
The elder branches wave.

Here they lie in their mounded rows,
Sons and daughters of countless woes,
Ay, here, beneath this Polish sod,
They wait the trump of God.

Every grave with its story writ
Deep in God's heart who keepeth it
As precious raindrops gathered up
In drought, within a cup.

"Every tear that my people shed,
Every spot where their feet have bled,
Through dreary wastes those feet have crossed,"
He saith, "not one is lost."

Cries of anguish that rend the air,
Sighs from deeps of a dull despair,
The groans of freemen held in thrall,
He saith, "I count them all."

Far away is the land they love,
O for wings of the blessed dove,
To flee for ever from the ken
Of savage-hearted men !

Here, they open their wings for flight,
Find escape from the Gentile's might,
And enter, after all their pain,
The rest that doth remain.

Wherefore think it not strange that they,
Tired of light ere the close of day,
With only death to hope for, should
Have called this place "The Good."

*So the Polish Jews call their burying places.

THE CHILDREN OF THE PALE.

Whence comes this motley, dark-eyed, swarthy crowd
Of alien children in a London street,
With laughter and with chatter shrill and loud
And hurrying feet ?

From that far land they come whose eagles look
O'er east and west. Their fathers crossed the waves
Because they would no longer tamely brook
The lot of slaves.

For generations in the gloom they dwelt
Dark as the sunless forests of the North,
Till suddenly within their hearts they felt
The call, "Come forth !"

The moss-grown walls of hoary synagogue
And school, the field of Death than life more kind,
The jewelled tables of the Decalogue
They left behind.

But in their hearts, as in the Holiest Place,
They bore the ark, its manna and its rod,
The lust of knowledge and the pride of race,
The awe of God.

And on their children's faces I behold
Flashes and gleams, as from some inner shrine,
Recalling ancient stories proudly told
Of Israel's line.

A BALLAD OF THE CAVES OF PORTH.

Through Porth hamlet,
The wild West shrieking,
Rose a rumour
No man's speaking ;
' Long Pete and Black Ben
Caught by foul weather
Lie in the near cave
Caged together ! '

Black Ben and Long Pete
Tall men and strong,
Laid hands on young Jean
Wrought her foul wrong,
Then flung her half-alive
To the wild water
That kept its prize fast
From those who sought her.

One saw the cruel deed,
Jean's little brother,
Saw, and in terror fled
Home to his mother.
Rose all the country side,
Man, woman, hound,
Hunted the hell-dogs,
Sought, never found.

Down in the darkness,
Silent as death,
Peering beneath their hands,
Holding their breath,
Ten men in anger
Thirsting for blood,
Crept where the tide flowed
Strong as a flood.

Cold was the water
Up to the knee,
Cold was the roof-drip,
Naught was to see.

"Now flare the torches !
We have you fast,
Out with you vermin,
Cornered at last ! "

There at the far end
Crouched on a ledge,
Cowered the miscreants
Close to the edge.
Eyes fixed in terror,
Teeth grinning white,
As men who shrink from
Some awful sight.

Awful ? Nay lovely,
Three feet beneath,
Rising and falling
With the sea's breath,
Lips half-way open,
Golden hair round her,
Hard by her murderers
Waiting, they found her.

What face she showed them
When the moon glistened,
What words she whispered
While the stars listened,
Curses the dead hold
Over the living,
Or the more terrible.
Words of forgiving,

This might no man tell,
Their lips were sealed,
Save for the laughter
That horribly pealed,
Cold, harsh, and grating,
No voice of man,
Through veins of hot blood
Chill shivers ran.

Gently they raised her
And bore her away,
In the strong arms
Of her father she lay,
While groping, stumbling,
Like men stricken blind,
Long Pete and Black Ben
Shambled behind.

Not a man touched them,
No woman curs't,
God's hand had reached them
And smitten them first,
Reft them of reason
Left them to stand
Bearing his dread,
Ineffaceable brand.

Summers and winters
Hasted away,
Yellow hair darkened,
Brown turned to grey,
Haunting and roaming,
Hated and feared,
Black Ben and Long Pete
Suffered their weird.

Haunting the churchyard
Where a white cross
Told of the black deed
Mourned for the loss,
Roaming the sea-shore,
Sleeping in caves,
List'ning for aye
To the sound of the waves.

Till after many days
Came their release,
Till the black storm-tide
Brought with it peace,
Flooding their hiding-place
Drifting them forth,
Setting them free
On the wet sands of Porth.

THE HEAVENLY LOVER.

I

It was the joyful sunrise hour,
The world beneath her lay unrolled,
As from the highest nunnery tower
She watched the shadows turn to gold.

The glistening glory climbed the sky,
It touched the height and searched the vale,
The forest laid its sackcloth by
And all its songsters fluted "Hail!"

The splendour lit the slumbering town,
The crowded haunt of busy man,
She looked through tears that trickled down
Chafing against the iron ban

That barred her from the world whose stir
Made every morn a glad surprise;
That happy world was not for her,
Save to behold with yearning eyes,

For her the damp and moss-grown walls,
The changeless order of the days,
The fellowship of patient thralls,
The loud monotony of praise.

She wrung her hands, "Oh hearts of stone!
"To cage a little fluttering dove
"Had I but known! Had I but known!
"I still were free for life and love.

"Thou Heavenly Lover, who, they said,
"Wouldst come to woo, and stay to win,
"Was it a lie, or art thou dead,
"Or hast thou seen and spurned my sin?"

She mourned like any prisoned bird,
Her face upon the stonework bowed,
Till with a guilty start she heard
A voice that called her, clear and loud.

II

There came a knocking at the gate,
 The wondering portress opened wide,
 With lowly mien, in piteous state
 A white-haired beggar stood outside.

His head was bare, his feet unshod,
 In coarsest garments scantily clothed,
 Upon his face the brand of God—
 The awful scars men feared and loathed.

The meek-eyed sisters held aloof
 But, pointing to a wooden shed,
 "A couch of straw, a sheltering roof,
 And food, are there," the Abbess said.

"And who," she cast her eyes around,
 "Will tend this leper for the sake
 "Of him who once on holy ground
 "The leper's bond of misery brake?"

In silent fear they stood, and shame,
 Their eyes cast down, their cheeks ablaze,
 Then from her tower the novice came
 With hurrying step, and wondering gaze.

"You called me?" "Nay," they said, "not we."
 "I heard the summons, and obeyed,"
 "Then go," the Abbess said, "and see"
 The burden that is on you laid."

She heard a tremor in the voice,
 The pity in their eyes she saw,
 But duty left no room for choice,
 The leper called her from his straw.

III

She raised the latch and stepped within,
 The dimness seemed to strike her blind,
 She felt the pangs of fear begin
 To shake the purpose of her mind.

When lo ! as o'er the horizon rim
The great sun looks on tropic seas,
And laughs, and at the sight of him
With one quick throb the darkness flees,

So, suddenly a point of light
Quivered, then burst into a flame,
The shadows spread their wings for flight,
And o'er the gloom a glory came.

The ashen laths were cedar wood,
The flagstones priceless marble gleamed,
The bed a jewelled wonder stood,
Such wonder never poet dreamed.

And there were trees with soaring stems,
And spreading leaves of gorgeous hue,
And dazzling fruits that shone like gems
And over all an arch of blue.

The lengthening walls were edged with flowers,
The air was fresh with odours sweet,
White blossoms fall in noiseless showers,
And made a pathway for her feet.

And on the bed as on a throne
He sat for whom her soul had yearned,
A tender radiance round Him shone
But o'er His head the aureole burned.

"And hast Thou come, indeed?" she cried,
"And wilt Thou love me for Thine own,
"And one day set me at Thy side,
"Yea even share with me Thy throne?"

Then as she felt the splendour grow,
And brighter beams of radiance shine,
She cast her down and whispered low,
"Nay, not Thy throne, Thy footstool mine."

IV.

With gentle words He bade her rise
And smiled away her new-born fear,
"Come forth," He said, "for Paradise,
The home of those who love, is here."

The narrowing bounds of time and space
Were straight abolished and forgot,
One glance at that beloved face
And earthly memories irked her not.

He led her by broad-bosomed streams
Whose waters sparkled clear and blue,
By forests flecked with golden gleams,
And all was fair and all was new.

The very air she breathed seemed strange,
Strange forms of life stood everywhere,
On everything was written change,
And all was new and all was fair.

With joy she yielded up her will,
The hours might crawl, the æons fly,
It seemed they two were standing still
While time, and life, and death rushed by.

Great cities rose before their eyes,
Then fell again to dusty sleep,
They saw the star of Empire rise,
And sink into the stormy deep.

They saw a long-drawn vast array
Whose numbers none could count or guess,
Climbing a rugged, stony way,
And faint with heat and weariness.

Not one small world alone engrossed
The scene on which their eyes were bent,
To this great struggling, suffering host
A thousand stars their legions sent.

Yet all she looked on, seemed but naught
 (Though everywhere new marvels lay),
Compared to one entrancing thought—
 “He loves, has loved, will love for aye.”

One longing still her soul possessed,
 “Lord, speak Thy love,” she whispering cried,
Smiling, He laid her fears to rest—
 “For love of thee the leper died.”

V.

With trembling steps, when evening fell,
 The Abbess sought the lowly shed,
“Did you not hear the vesper bell?”
 “Come forth, and rest, my child,” she said

But there was silence; greater fear
 Cast out the less. She pushed the door,
And on the threshold paused to peer
 Into the gloom that lowered before.

Her feeble lamp she held on high
 And by its flickering light she saw
A slender childish figure lie
 Stretched out beside the empty straw.

With such a smile upon the face,
 And such a gladness in the eyes,
The abbess from her vantage-place
 A little sternly bade her rise.

In vain. No more the iron rule
 Could bind the soul that yearned to roam,
From hard routine of dreariest school
 The Lord of Love had called her home.

HECTOR UNBURIED.

Nine days had great Achilles unappeased,
Behind his chariot trailed the godlike form
Of Hector in the dust ; and still by night
He slept not, for within his mighty heart
Black wrath and bitter sorrow swept in tides
Of passion, and he grovelled on the ground
In fruitless anguish till the rosy dawn.

But when he felt upon his cheek the breath
Of Eos, soft as winds that hardly stir
The leaves in Ida, not unwillingly
He rose, and left his tent, and yoked again
The immortal steeds, Poseidon's bridal gift,
Xanthos and Balios, and with leather thongs
Bound to his car once more the unburied dead,
And thrice about the solitary mound
Reared to the memory of Menoitios' son
He circled crying "Hail, O best-beloved
Whom the dark gates have opened to receive !
I have accomplished all I promised thee,
And this dead dog thou seest at my heels
I hold unburied for the dogs and kites.
Soon shall I join thee, and my ashes rest
With thine beneath another, statelier pile
Which men in days to come shall wondering see
And ask—Who reared, and who beneath it lies ?
Then shall the tale be told of this fierce strife
And all my valorous deeds, nor thine be left
Unspoken."

But with sad and pitiful hearts
The long-maned horses bore their master back
Along the shore, for all his words had failed
In broken cries of anguish ; and he drew
His sword and cut the thongs, and spurned the dead
In cruel wrath, and strode within his tent.

So stretched upon the wide and open plain
Lay Hector, and above, the burning wheels
Of Helios scorched the bare and glistening soil,

While close at hand the foul and ravenous dogs
Came hurrying, and the ominous wings of prey
Hung in the sky, and there was none to help.

But fair and fresh as when the spirit made
Its home within the warm and pulsing heart,
The glorious body of noble Priam's son
Unscarred, unwithered, lay as on a couch,
And neither hungry tooth nor savage beak
Could touch him, for—unseen by mortal eye—
The fairest, brightest of the immortal race,
Dione's radiant daughter o'er him bent
Pouring the fragrant oil and healing balm
Over the goodly limbs, and Leto's son
Phoibos Apollo, Lord of the silver bow
Called to a wandering cloud and bade it cast
Its grateful shadow from the heat of noon.

But when the gentle Hours who keep Heaven's gates
Stood waiting to unyoke the fiery steeds
Of Helios and from the purple wave
Selene's silver car began to mount
Drawn by its milk-white horses, and the earth
Was veiled in darkness, and a floating mist
Hither and thither, like a phantom sea
Washed round the funeral pile, a voice was heard
Above the murmur of the waves, though thin
And faint as hollow echoes of the wail
Uttered by some lost child upon the hills
Whom in the lowering night its parents seek
With wavering torches and despairing cries.

It was the wraith of Hector chill and lone,
Untimely banished from the lovely earth
Nor yet admitted to the sombre peace
And shadowed realm of Hades. As a reed
Upon the margin of some marshy pool
Blown by the wind now this way and now that,
It moved unresting till at length it stood
Over the body with the flowing locks
And rosy bloom, and thus the sad voice spake :
" O Goddess of the myrtle and the rose

And all fair-seeming, fragrant things that woo
The senses, not for this I give thee thanks
That thou hast kept unscathed to eye of man
The house which Death has ravaged. Better far
Bloodstained, defiled, unburied to remain,
For grievous has thy favour been to all
The race of Priam since that evil day
When, dazzled by the beauty and the bribe,
His fairest son rejecting kingly power
And hard-won glory, chose instead, thy boon
Of lust and shame.

Ah, Paris, brother mine,
Though craven, for the hateful twins have slain
Thy manhood, would thou wert as in the days
When all unknown, thine arm was strong, thy heart
Unstained, and all men blessed thee for thy help !
But now within thy lofty chamber sweet
With fragrant spices, beautiful as dawn
Thou dalliest, and this windy desolate shore
Is blackened with the blood of better men,
And I who strove to ward the spears of fate
From holy Ilios wander void of strength
Hopeless and helpless, yet foreseeing still
The dreaded hour, and woeful for the woes
Of those I loved when, glorying in my strength,
I drove the fierce Achaians to their ships.

Yet not for this, with weak and idle words
Would I affront the ears of Zeus. Vain, vain,
The smoking altars and the goodly shrines,
They could not shroud from his all-seeing eye
The undying sin, nor stifle in their birth
Its offspring—grief and shame and fire and sword.
These vanquished Hector, these, and one beside—
Athene, cold as ice, but fierce as flame :
Wisdom and strength and awful purity
Perfect and pitiless. Alas for him
Whom Fate commits to such unequal strife,
Betrayed by weaker arms and fainter hearts,
By Aphrodite and that furious god
Whose lust is blood, as hers the ignoble joys

Of dalliance. But indeed, when all is done,
I ask no pity, for with heart as pure
I met the ægis-bearer, and I fell
Slain by no mortal hand, and she whose eyes
Are as the eyes of Zeus, what time she smote,
Struck at the ravisher and not at me.

And thou fierce warrior soon to taste of death
I grudge thee not the hours that still remain,
Nor all the glory of thy mighty deeds.
I hate thee not, nor envy, save for this
That Fate who is the master of the gods
And yet the slave of righteousness, was thine,
And toiled for thee with all the silent strength
Which shakes the steadfast pillars of the world.
I slew thy dearest, aye, nor him alone,
For darkness covers many a flashing eye
That saw the poisoning of my dreadful spear
And naught besides. Ah, would that once again
They might behold the beautiful earth and taste
Its thousand joys. But sorrow in my tracks
Has hunted long : thy footsteps too she dogs,
And thy red spear has rent a thousand hearts
That never faced thee on the battle field.
Yet thou, for all thy fury, wilt relent
And I shall enter through the frowning gates
Of Hades where in the appointed time
Those I have loved will gather in the gloom,
And we shall walk the fields of asphodel
Remembering fairer scenes and happier days,
The golden sunlight and the starry sky."

THE MAN WHO FOUGHT HIS WAY IN.

Good Master Bunyan, often when in boyhood,
I followed all the paths of Christian's journey
Loving the tale not less than Froissart's story
Of battlefield and tourney,

Longest I lingered at that house of wonders,
The dwelling of Interpreter the wise,
Heard with the pilgrim's ears his host's expounding,
Looked with the pilgrim's eyes ;

Till I beheld the palace fair and stately,
With folk that trod the roof in rich array,
But at the portals, armed with sword and buckler,
Fierce men to bar the way.

And many fain to share that mansion's splendour,
Who shrank in fear before the savage throng,
Or, venturing, fled, when upon helm and breast-plate
The blows fell fierce and strong.

Till one stepped forth, broad-shouldered and stout-visaged,
(Good Master Bunyan, wast not thou the man ?)
Drew his good sword, then with bent head, right onward
Against the warders ran.

Ah, how the clang of ringing steel resounded
As inch by inch he fought his steadfast way,
Till pleasant voices from above gave greeting—
"Come in !" I heard them say.

Not only in our Bunyan's page immortal,
Is that stern battle to be won or lost,
For each, for all, there waits the guarded gateway
Whose threshold must be crossed.

Well, then, for him who flings away the scabbard,
And from the siren, not the foeman flees,
What ! wilt thou dare to pity him, poor trifer
Who seeketh naught but ease ?

Pity the puny race who cannot suffer
The pricks of disappointment, pity them,
Not him who wears upon his brow a garland
Wov'n of the thorny stem.

Pity the fickle-hearted, those who waver,
Nor fix their eyes upon the far-off goal,
Not him who strains till faint and worn with labour,
Yet keeps a steadfast soul.

Pity the coward hearts that have no patience
To wait for what the silent years shall bring,
Not him who sees them passing, empty-handed,
Calm as a sculptured king.

Waste not thy pity on the souls triumphant
Who toil and toil through darkness and in pain,
Elect are they from time's first birth, and carry
Marks of their noble strain.

They dread not trouble who pursue not pleasure,
They fear not failure who renounce success,
And he whose pale steed brings a curse to others,
Stops at their door to bless.

Then, the fierce battle at the gateway ending,
Loud o'er the din and clamour of the fray,
Voices of welcome round the portals linger—
"Come in!" I hear them say.

A HYMN OF DEATH.

Lord of the land of darkness, thy domain
Knows not the splendour of the awakening sun,
O'er its wide fields there waves no yellow grain,
No lingering glory tells when day is done,
But everywhere is quietness and peace,
A land of shadows as of wings outspread,
Where strife, and hot desire, and anguish cease,
And, regnant in their stead,
Broods the unbroken silence of the dead.

Shepherd that leanest pensive on thy crook,
In the low valley of the gathered mist,
Watching with fixed, unfathomable look
Yon smiling uplands which the sun hath kissed,
Lo, hither come the stragglers from the flocks
Wearily stumbling down the rugged steep,
Torn by the briers, bruised by the cruel rocks,
Ah, Shepherd, lead thy sheep
Gently unto the bourne of rest and sleep.

Healer of heartache, when, beneath the strain
Of toil and suffering, the tired heart beats low,
Or the racked body writhes in throes of pain,
And weeping round the house the mourners go,
Calmly thou enterest through the fast-closed door.
Smiling on those poor souls that cower and shrink,
Then, standing by the sufferer, bendest o'er,
And givest him to drink
A draught fresh-drawn from blessed Lethe's brink.

Helmsman that sittest mid the lowering dark,
Patiently stretching forth thy strong right hand
To those who fear thee and thy dusky bark,
Thou mayest not stay ; a wind blows from the land,
The rushing keel pursues the ebbing wave
Thy trembling freight turn their sad eyes on thine
That show not doubt or dread, intent and grave.
For thee, for thee, they shine,
Those lights that gleam beyond the horizon line.

Warder of this great dungeon-palace built
By Him whose footstool is the furthest star,
Here lie thy prisoners—spirits stained with guilt,
And the white souls that need not chain or bar.
Untiring, through its endless corridor
Thou rangest, and the clanking of thy key
Is music to the captives who would soar,
And only wait for thee
To draw the bolt and whisper "Liberty !"

Master of subtler harmonies then fill
The upper air where roll the heavenly spheres,
Life strikes a thousand chords that soothe and thrill—
Love, hate, revenge, ambition, laughter, tears ;
One note is thine, one note the heart of man
Yields to thy touch, then like a broken string,
Falls mute, but that clear strain beyond the span
Of short-lived time shall ring,
Tuning the anthems which the immortals sing.

Great Shadow, when in visions of the night
Before our eyes unveiled, thy form hath passed,
And our proud hearts have paid in quick affright
Their tribute to thee, silent, sombre, vast,
Have we not seen, through and beyond thee, rise—
Between thee and the light that fires the sun—
The substance thou translatest to our eyes,
The awful form of One
With Whom have time, and life, and death begun ?

THE LEPERS.

Unclean ! Unclean ! pass by with bated breath,
Garments close gathered, eyes that will not see
These whited sepulchres, this life in death.
These faces with the marks of leprosy.

And thou, O poet, sully not thy page,
Thy virgin page, with thoughts of sin and shame,
For beauty is the poet's heritage,
And songs of beauty win the need of fame.

I answer, other hands may pluck the flowers,
And other brows the laurel wreath adorn,
For some the sombre shade of midnight hours,
For some the beauty of the unclouded morn.

For me, I know how fast the tireless feet,
And cruel wolf-fangs of temptation press,
Urging its quarry through the mid-day heat,
And the cool evening's blessed peacefulness.

Out of such knowledge springs the blessed growth
Of love that halts not at the pure and good,
But turns unto the outcast, nothing loth
To own with them a common brotherhood.

O publicans and sinners, friends of His,
Whose white soul knew not fleck or stain of sin,
Whose dear face o'er the crowded centuries,
Looks from the open door and bids you in,

Poor hunted souls too weak to find escape,
I too, have known the horrors of the chase,
I too, have seen the monstrous wolf-jaws gape,
Together let us seek a resting-place.

All ye who bear upon you as a brand
The scar of leprosy that eats the soul,
Open your ranks and let us hand in hand
Hasten across the desert to our goal.

Abana's streams are fair, and fairer still
Are Pharpar's waters rolling to the sea,
Nay, turn from these to Jordan's lowly rill,
There must the fountains of our cleansing be.

STEVENSON OF THE LETTERS.

Long, hatchet face, black hair, and haunting gaze
That follows, as you move about the room,
Ah, this is he who trod the darkening ways,
And plucked the flowers upon the edge of doom—

The bright, sweet-scented flowers that star the road
To Death's dim dwelling. Others heed them not,
With sad eyes fixed upon that drear abode,
Weeping, and wailing their unhappy lot.

But he went laughing down the shadowed way,
The boy's heart leaping still within his breast,
Weaving his garlands when his mood was gay,
Mocking his sorrows with a solemn jest.

The high Gods gave him wine to drink ; a cup
Of strong desire, of knowledge, and of pain,
He set it to his lips and drank it up,
Smiling, then turned unto his flowers again.

These are the flowers of that immortal strain
Which, when the hand that plucked them drops and dies,
Still keep their radiant beauty free from stain,
And breathe their fragrance through the centuries.

ROBERT BROWNING.

Fallen ! the King-bird of the mighty wing
Now brooding o'er the deeps, now beating fast
The upper air as if in haste to wring
Her secret from the silent gleaming vast.

Fallen ? Nay, hear you not the voice that calls
Exulting from those steeps his flight hath won,
The message from the enfranchised to the thralls
"Homewards," it cries, "the eagle to the sun !"

CECIL RHODES.

He dreamed of Empire, no ignoble dream ;
Not for himself alone, he hoarded gold ;
He clutched at power and fame—the things that seem,
The things that are, escaped his strenuous hold.

ISOLATION.

The moon is large, the heavens are clear :
Above the trees that crown the height
Two stars are shining, two so near,
It seems their shimmering rays unite.

But she who holds the master-key
Of knowledge looks with smiling face.
"Between those gleaming sparks you see
Are stretched the myriad miles of space.

I turn unto the close-at-hand,
The world where distance cheats us not ;
How close her thronging peoples stand,
All brethren of a common lot.

Nay, the immeasurable sea
Wherein the shining planets roll
Is small to that immensity
Encircling every human soul.

Grieve not that man must stand apart,
Whose lonely spirit, he shall find,
Is closer to the Eternal Heart,
Than to the nearest of his kind.

THE FOOLS OF SIGHT.

With jewelled spur and dazzling crest,
The belted warrior guards the West,
And waves his mighty sword to span
From Sirius to Aldebaran.

With him I watch the midnight sky
And see the glittering hosts go by,
Till all my heart is one desire
Towards those glorious sons of fire.

Yet beauty such as mortals know
Can dwell not in that fervid glow,
Nor kindred life to that we claim
Abide within the orbs of flame.

But, circling round each fiery spark,
Are worlds to us for ever dark,
Nor eye of man, nor optic glass
Those bounds of distance may o'erpass.

The beauty of the sunbeam there
May fall as genial and as fair,
And there may Life, from primal cell,
Repeat her long-drawn miracle.

With flower and fruit, with bird and beast,
May kindly Nature spread her feast,
And starry dust its worth avow,
Transfigured into breast and brow.

O dark and silent though ye be,
Great ships that sail the heavenly sea,
It is for you our hearts should yearn,
Towards you, our straining vision turn !

Far off, or near, by day, by night,
We find ourselves the fools of sight,
Pursuers of a fruitless quest,
Who seek the brightest, not the best.

CHRYSANTHEMUMS.

All through the first glad rapture of the spring,
When lilies lift their spires of scented snow,
And daffodils like cressets flame and glow ;

Through ardours of the summer noons that bring
A flush of tropic beauty to the cold
And dreary north, as one by one unfold

The glories of the garden ; to the day
When from the bough the leaves hang thin and red,
And roses droop with petals half outspread ;

Amid all changes, changeless, we display
Only our sturdy foliage, sober green,
And gray buds shyly peeping out between.

Till at the last when frosts and stormy rains
Have wrought their worst upon the dying flowers,
And winter lords it o'er the darkening hours,

The fire of summer hid within our veins
Bursts in a blaze of beauty, and our store
Of gathered riches gladly we outpour.

Ours is the perfect life that holds repressed
Spring, summer, autumn, in its swelling breast,
And in the winter gives the world its best.

THE VOICE OF THE MOUNTAINS.

Crowned with the glory of the eternal snow,
We hold high converse with the stars and sun,
The little race of men how should we know,
Or the low levels where their course is run ?

Yet sometimes come the footsteps of the brave,
Who dare the perils of the icy steep ;
Joy, health, and fame we give them, or a grave,
The good we welcome, but the best we keep.

THE VOICE OF THE SEA.

On my bared face the face of heaven looks down,
And now the sky is turquoise and I laugh,
And now the winds are loosed, and with a frown
I scatter all the labouring ships like chaff.

But far below, in that unfathomed deep
Where neither sound can pierce nor light can dwell,
In calm unbroken as a dreamless sleep,
Mother of life, I guard my secret well.

THE MUSICIAN.

Because the windows of his soul were set
Towards those high hills whereon the harps of God
Sound sweet above the earth's perpetual fret,
Like singing birds that soar above the sod,

Therefore, whene'er his fingers touched the keys,
Strange voices mingled in the sounds he woke,
As if in those majestic harmonies,
Divine intelligencies lived and spoke.

THE PAINTER.

He saw the moving forms of earth and sky,
Wide-flowing waters, and the mirrored star,
He looked on all things with that inner eye
Which draws its power of vision from afar,

Then gave unto the canvas all he saw,
Not what we see, but what God meant for seeing;
That lay undreamed till one that knew its law
Passed by, and looked, and called it into being.

THE LAST RIDE.

Proudly, the Roman legend saith,
The warrior Curtius rode to death,
And spurred into the abyss abhorred
With glittering mail and flashing sword.

For thee, O soul of mine, to-day
As then, a chasm bars the way,
And soon or late thy trembling steed
Upon the brink must check its speed

But thou, array thee in thy best,
Thy coat of proof, thy gallant crest,
Whisper a word into his ear,
Then leap to death with smiling cheer.

THE OLD SINNER.

When savage Winter stamps his heel
On the green earth and leaves it black,
Beside the fire I crouch, and feel
His cruel grip on limbs and back.

There hour by hour I sit and smoke,
And shudder as I call to mind
The laws of God and man I broke,
A reckless creature, deaf and blind.

Upon my knees the Lord I praise
That He has given me grace to see
The folly of those sinful days,
And from His blazing wrath to flee.

But when the plaguey Spring begins
To stir the blood within my veins,
I fall to smiling at my sins
And grow forgetful of my pains.

The scents of May, the heats of June
Run quivering to my finger-tips.
While saucy song and merry tune
Come lilting on my withered lips.

Till Autumn throws her shadows down,
And tweak and twinge begin once more,
Then on the past again I frown,
And drive the devil from the door.

HOLIDAYS.

In the hot and dusty streets of London,
'Mid the rush and roar of toil and traffic,
I can hear the voices of the sea, the mountain,
And the far, wide-stretching moorland.

"Child of Nature," so they cry, "come hither,
Bring thy flagging body, and the spirit
Worn and chafed with petty troubles, mean distractions,
Disappointment, disillusion.

"Here the great, wise mother has her dwelling.
Let her lay her hand upon thy forehead,
There is healing in her touch, and benediction
In the smile that speaks her welcome."

I will go and take my fill of silence
Broken only by the brattling streamlet,
By the plashing of the waves upon the shingle,
By the wind among the branches.

I will go and leave my cares behind me,
I will be a child again and nestle
On the bosom of my mother ; she shall lull me
With her ancient song to slumber.

But the hours of sleep will pass and, waking,
I shall hear the voices of the men and women
Whom I love, the brothers and the sisters calling
From the far-off, crowded city.

Then the quiet will begin to weary,
And the very beauty pall upon me,
And the mother's gentle voice will whisper softly,
"Go, my child, Thy Father calls thee."

SEA BIRDS.

Not like the petted weaklings of the cage,
Or the shy singers of the wood, are we,
The rapture of the storm our heritage,
Our birthright the wide marches of the sea.

For when the wind with shrill and angry cries,
Comes hunting from his barren, icy North,
And at his call the white-toothed breakers rise,
From our grim fastnesses we hurry forth.

Laughing, we yield ourselves to his embrace,
Or proudly spurn his arms with strenuous wing,
And ride the ravening billows in their chase,
On, on, towards the far horizon ring,

The great ships stagger shuddering to their doom,
The heart of man grows faint with fear, but we—
For us nor dangers lurk, nor terrors loom,
In all the roar and rage of wind and sea.

THE PARIAH.

Poor child, who once wast gathered in
 Beneath the shelter of the fold,
But now art doomed, because of sin,
 To wander in the outer cold ;

To hide thyself in daylight's glare,
 But 'neath the shelter of the dark,
To tramp the half-deserted square,
 To prowl about the dreary park.

With words of love upon the tongue,
 With wanton glances of the eye,
With readier curses freely flung
 On those who pass unheeding by.

To see departing, year by year,
 The comeliness of health and youth,
And night by night condemned to hear
 From cruel lips the bitter truth.

And sometimes in a wild despair,
 To gaze upon the happy past,
Or front the hopeless future, where
 The hungry river waits at last.

Father and mother ! ye have striven,
 And won, yourselves, the blessed prize,
How can you from the joys of Heaven
 Look earthward with untroubled eyes ?

Oh, were there not a saving power
 Unknown to us who can but hope,
Ye could not for a single hour
 Behold your child in darkness grope.

THE SPIRIT OF BEAUTY.

There is in every busy haunt of men
As surely as in bosky dell or glen,
One shrine at least, where, lifted up on high,
The Spirit of Beauty waits the seeing eye.

He asks no pomp of gold or carven stone,
Sometimes in squalid streets he makes his throne,
There, 'mid the blinded eyes, he sits arrayed
In glorious garments woven of light and shade.

Nor less in every human life there stands
At least one secret fane not made with hands
Where, through the sombre and the commonplace,
The same glad Spirit shows his radiant face.

Wouldst thou with beauty feed thy starving soul?
Go not where mountains soar and breakers roll,
But pray the Gods their costliest gifts to send—
The eye to see, the heart to comprehend.

A CHRISTMAS CAROL.

All in the calm and happy night,
Beneath the starlit sky,
From every land a pilgrim band
Goes forth right joyously.
The king with sceptre and crown,
The queen with jewelled gown,
Nobles of high estate,
And the lowly with the great,
The labourer with his hod,
And the delver of the sod.

They have left their toil, their pomp, their feast,
To follow a light that shines in the East,
*(When Christ our Lord was born afar,
Over the manger there shone a star).*

The warrior's sword lies in its sheath,
The sword of justice too,
And king and queen with gracious mien,
Do as the humblest do.

Over the dewy grass
Hand in hand they pass,
Hatred, and lust, and pride,
In the hearts of all have died
Love has come unto birth,
Heaven has stooped to earth.

So they leave the field, the court, the feast,
To follow the star that shines in the East.
*(When Christ our Lord was a little child,
He looked in the face of His mother and smiled).*

On, on, beneath the eyes of heaven,
The long procession goes,
Under the beat of tropic heat,
Over the northern snows.

There is manhood in its prime,
And the riper fruit of time,
Youth with its keen desires,
And unextinguished fires,
But childhood leads the van
In this pilgrimage of man,

And a little child must leader be
To the feet of our King, for a child is He.
*(When Christ our Lord would come to his own,
On His mother's lap He made His throne).*

THE TRUE ENGLAND.

I who have drawn the sword and faced the world,
And sown the seed whose fruit is hate and wrath,
I who have seen my venturous flag unfurled
On plain, and desert sand, and mountain path,

I at whose lifted finger the wide sea
Is thronged with frowning argosies of death,
I who have never learned to bow the knee
To mortal man, or stand with bated breath,

I am weary of the clash of steel,
Sick of the scent of blood, and I am fain
Of love not hate. Within my heart I feel,
Prescient, the anguish of my children's pain.

For brave and simple are the gathering hosts
Who move like dumb beasts to the shambles led,
Who hear the word, and take their ordered posts,
Nor know the cause for which their blood is shed.

But on the cunning brains that work for war,
And on the hands that clutch to feed their hoard,
On the shrill tongues that trumpet forth afar
Their boasts as mine, on these let shame be poured.

For all the blood in needless conflict spilt,
Quick stab of agony and long-drawn throe,
For all the tears that follow, theirs the guilt,
And on their heads I call a triple woe.

THE GRAVES OF MAGERSFONTEIN.

The grey-haired mother of the mist
Looks out across her wintry sea,
"My lads have gone to keep their tryst,
O, when will they come back to me?"

"With skirling pipes and ringing cheers
They left the land of loch and burn,
To-night the sound is in my ears,
But when, ah when will they return?"

"I know the southern land is fair,
A brighter sun, a bluer sky,
I know that fame is waiting there,
But not for those who drop and die.

"The one may rise, the many fall,
The shallow grave must hide their bones,
The grass shall be their funeral pall,
Their monument the gathered stones."

O grey-haired mother of the mist,
O dark-eyed daughter of the sun,
Your lips the same dead lips have kissed,
Though leagues apart, ye yet are one.

'Tis Britain by the northern sea,
'Tis Britain by the southern foam,
And thy brave sons who far from thee
Must close their eyes, still sleep at home.

PRIVATE JOSEPH HINTON.

(Nurse in charge of the field hospital at Orange River, who, after over four months of devoted service, succumbed, himself, to enteric fever.—See "Daily News," April 3rd, 1900).

When the fierce, passionate lust of blood leaps high
And "life for life" is all the soidier's cry,
It is an easy thing to thrust and die.

But those long months of toil and vigil spent
In the hot misery of the fever tent,
With death's grim shadow ever imminent ;

To see the light fade out of yearning eyes,
To hear the last sad words that drop to sighs,
To watch the shadow lengthening as it lies.

Until it falls upon the watcher's face
And seals his eyes in slumber, and his place
Knows him no more ; this is the harder case,

The nobler courage, this the perfect crown
Of life's adventure, so to lay it down.
Wherefore the tribute of this halting verse
I lay with pride upon a hero's hearse.

"KILLED."

Only last June he scored his century,
And we were there to see.
We cheered him to the echo, we whose day
Has long since passed away.
Renewing, as we watched, the glorious hours
Of youth with all its unexhausted powers.

Now from afar, where 'neath the tropic heats
The heart of England beats,
Flashes the pitiless word. It cannot be !
What claim had Death on thee ?
Life was thy birthright, and untasted joy,
Thy meed, O gallant, simple-hearted boy.

Death frowns and goes his way with crimsoned hands,
But thou, O land of lands,
Queen of the nations, must thy throne be built
On blood untimely spilt,
Like that grim lord's who, as the story runs,
Reared his doomed city on his slaughtered sons ?

VOX MILITANTIS.

On the wide veldt, beneath the vaster sky,
The graves of battling Boer and Briton lie.
By day the sunlight watches o'er their sleep,
By night the stars their solemn vigil keep.

Cold, calm, and brilliant, from that awful height
They ask : "Were ye so weary of the light ?
Ours the slow æons, yours the flying day,
Why reckless fling its noon and eve away ?"

And lo, the answer : "Nay, but life was sweet,
Death a grim horror that we loathed to meet,
But Duty spurred us to the foremost place,
And Honour beckoned with a shining face."

THE FEVER-GRAVES.

What is the soldier's claim to glory? Not
The stroke of vengeance when the blood is hot,
No, nor the joy of battle; that at least
He shares with Indian brave and ravening beast.

But this; within his secret soul to hear
The voice of Duty, solemn and austere,
And on her altar, with a sigh, to lay
The heavy price obedience needs must pay.

Wherefore I deem them happiest who fall,
With hands unstained by blood, at England's call.
Proudly unto their nameless graves they go,
Vanquished by Death, but by no meaner foe.

THE SWALLOWS

In ancient days when, under cloudless skies,
Spring's earliest swallows touched the Italian shore,
Sad-hearted mothers gazed with yearning eyes,
And cried, "Our darlings come to us once more."

A pretty fancy which our wiser age
Has long outgrown. And yet—for England stands
Watching the strife in which her sons engage
At her behest, in those far southern lands.

A thousand sons she mourns, untimely slain
Like early flowers that fall beneath the scythe,
Swallows who seek your English home again,
Over their graves your song was loud and blithe

A few short weeks ago. Perhaps a gleam
Lit heavy eyes that saw you swoop and dart,
While memories of some willow-shaded stream
Or windy down arose within the heart.

Wherefore to us, this spring, your song shall be
Fraught with a deeper meaning than of yore,
As if, across the leagues of sundering sea,
Some whispered message from our dead ye bore.

THE TWO MOTHERS.

Great mother of the proudest race,
Save one, that ever drew the sword,
Who gatherest now with smiling face
Thy sons around the festal board.

From lands that see the Northern lights
Shine splendid over wastes of snow,
From lands where through the summer nights
The stars like fiery cressets glow,

From East and West, o'er sand and flood,
Descendants of a mighty line
And proud to claim their right of blood
As thou to call them sons of thine,

They come to crown the new-made King,
To share the plaudits of the throng,
And in their loyal hearts to bring
The strength that makes the Empire strong.

O happy mother, open wide
The gates of rock that front the foam,
And welcome with rejoicing pride
Thy children to their ancient home.

But all the pomp, the pride, the joy,
Ring strange and hollow unto me :
They cannot give me back my boy
Who sleeps beside the Southern sea.

THE TWO ARMIES.

They will soon be hurrying homewards
In a tumult of joy and of pride,
The air will be filled with exulting,
And the cities will stream to their side.

I shall think of those quiet battalions
Who are lying afar 'neath the sod,
With eyes that are blind to the flowers,
But have looked on the face of their God.

Can they hear the sad voices that call them?
Do they reckon of the tear-drops that fall?
Are they thrilled by the blare of our triumph,
Or know they the worth of it all?

THE SHRINE OF THE WAR-GOD.

Splendid, upon a bare and blasted plain,
It rose before me in the sunset light,
Vast, many-towered, like some majestic fane
With one great cross of gold to crown its height.

And then I looked within; a poison-breath,
Sickened me, and I saw the temple's Lord
Stalk up and down his festering house of death,
A naked savage with a dripping sword.

OBLIVION.

Over the vanished past my waters spread,
Drowning the memory of the mighty dead.
The dust of ancient empire is my bed.

A thousand years to me are but a day ;
At morn a nation rises, with the gray
Of evening twilight it has passed away.

The deeds that shone so bright in all men's eyes,
Of statesman's craft, of warrior's bold emprise,
All these lie hid in my dark treasures.

Mine, all I cover, yet not mine alone,
For sometimes He who sits on Heaven's high throne
Takes from my treasure-house to fill His own.

My best He takes ; the martyr's faith and deed,
The sacrifice of self to others' need,
The act of homely love that asks no meed.

These are my jewels which at His command
I yield to deck those gates that open stand
For ever, day and night, in God's fair land.

OUR LADY OF EMPIRE.

In the dim vaults of eternal twilight,
Each upon his bed, as if in slumber,
Lie the kings and chieftains of long-vanished empires.

He who drew his bow upon the plains of Shinar ;
He whose face lives in Egyptian granite ;
He who boasted as he saw his city's splendour ;

Macedon's great lord ; all-conquering Cæsar ;
Attila the scourge of God ; and—fiercer—
Europe's iron-hearted, waxen-faced dictator.

Very still they lie, their hearts scarce beating,
All the world forgot and all its passions,
Love and hatred and ambition burned to ashes.

See the awful, silent door swings open,
Who is this that enters, tall and stately,
Robed in dazzling white, and cinctured as with sapphires ?

In her right hand flames the sword of battle,
Gleaming on her brow a golden circlet,
Set with jewels from the wide earth's farthest limits.

As the grasses stir beneath the South wind,
So the sleepers turn, with eyes half open,
" Art thou, too, become as we ? " their pale lips murmur.

On she moves with swift but noiseless footsteps,
And a little smile, half pride, half pity,
Plays around her parted lips, her only answer.

On she moves, undaunted by the shadows,
For a voice is calling, and a vision
Shines before her, brightest in the hours of darkness.

Mistress of the island and the empire !
Swords may break or rust, and crowns may perish,
But the vision and the voice endure for ever.

THE CHILDREN'S WALK.

I would not have my modest garden planned
Without at least one little children's walk,
Where I with them may wander hand in hand,
Sharing their simple talk.

There is no mirth that fills me with such gladness
As that made beautiful by children's laughter ;
The wholesome joy, without one thought of sadness
To cast a shadow after.

There are no secrets half so dear to me
As those they sometimes whisper in my ear,
Up-straining from their perch upon my knee,
I bending down to hear.

The wise and prudent ? Ah, sometimes we weary
(Thank God) of wisdom and of prudence both ;
The 'halls of learning' strike us chill and dreary,
We quit them, nothing loth ;

And turn to the young faces, bright and sunny,
And turn to the young hearts that know not yet
The selfish strife for power, or fame, or money,
With all its grief and fret.

Out on the meadow, or within the garden,
They work the spell that mages wrought of yore ;
And hearts the world had seemed to age and harden,
Grow young and warm once more.

Wherefore, I would not have my garden planned,
Without at least one little children's walk,
Where I with them may wander hand in hand,
And share their simple talk.

TO NELLIE AND MABEL.

Dead, one of you, the other far away
Beneath the shining of the Southern Cross,
Dead, both of you, sometimes I sadly say,
Feeling a double loss.

For what is death but change? And life as well
Is full of change, and both of you have fled,
And which is further from me, who can tell
The living or the dead?

IN MEMORY OF A CHILD.

I.

All day, all night in weariness she lay,
And tossed unresting, though she longed for rest,
Kind love was near for comfort and for stay,
And did its best.

Alas ! that best but unavailing proved
To gain the end it sought : yet wherefore weep ?
For God Himself looked down on His beloved,
And gave her sleep.

II.

I cannot think of her as dead,
Because the bright and eager face
On which the warmth of life is shed
Still looks from its accustomed place.

The hum of school begins once more,
The teacher takes the Book in hand,
And verse by verse, are pondered o'er
The words so simple, yet so grand.

But she in some diviner school
Sits joyful at the Master's feet,
And 'neath His wise and loving rule
From incompleteness, grows complete.

III.

'Twas winter when she died,
The snow lay thick on path and plot,
And whitened all the pleasant spot
Where she must now abide.

To-day the voice of spring
Through sunny South and rugged North,
Sounds its glad note :—' Come forth ! Come forth !'
To every living thing.

And lo ! on hedge and tree,
The young leaf bursting from its tomb,
While garden wastes begin to bloom
With white anemone.

But vain that call to her,
It echoes not where she is laid,
Beyond the reach of sun and shade,
Her quiet hath no stir.

IV.

I will not seek the living with the dead,
Nor what she was recount,
My thoughts shall upward mount.
Leaving the purlieus of her earthly bed.

Yet in that bed, you say, she lies asleep ;
Ah ! no, she is not there,
Only a garment that she used to wear,
No slumber doth the soul imprisoned keep.

V.

Our sleep is birth into a life which lies
In lands where, waking, we have never been,
And through the lids that cover weary eyes
Strange sights are seen.

So that last gift which God Himself bestows
Upon the children whom His love hath blest,
Endows them with new life, befitting those
Whose work is rest.

VALE.

(To a child who was taken ill after her father, and died, while he recovered).

Little child that standest on the threshold
Of the dark descent that leads—no man knows whither,
Following in the footsteps of thy father.

Where the footprints lead, thou walkest bravely.
Darker grow the shadows, steeper falls the pathway,
Nearer looms the vast and shrouded portal.

Ah, but see ! the footprints turn, remounting,
Tiny feet, you too the golden sun is calling
To the flowers and grasses of the meadow.

Wherefore dost thou halt as if uncertain ?
What ! another voice, not father's, and not mother's ?
Who is this that speaks ; " My child, come hither." ?

Whose the hand stretched out athwart the darkness ?
Whose the arm that clasps thee, strong, yet very gentle ?
Whose the kiss upon the lips of silence ?

LITTLE LIL.

Who is this that takes her stand
On the plot of meadow land
With a snowball in her hand
To command

Our advance?

Who is this but little Lil
Merry now, but merrier still
When the rooms begin to fill
And Quadrille

Is the dance?

Who so gay as Lily then
With the tallest gentlemen
Six feet two and three feet ten
If my pen

Had the skill

I would sing of feet and frocks
Swaying as the music rocks
And revealing dainty 'clocks'
Up the socks

Worn by Lil.

I would sing of rumpled hair
Spite of nurse's utmost care
Waving free beneath the glare
And the flare

Of the lamps.

Till both dance and romping done
Ended too the supper fun
And the sleepy stage begun
Everyone

Homeward tramps

Then—in fancy this—I see
Lily in her *robe de nuit*
Drop each little pink-white knee
Wearily

By the bed

While in quaint old-fashioned phrase
Where the thoughts as in a maze
Seems to lose itself, she prays
Or but says
Prayers instead.

Sleepy now are eyes and lips
Tired to the finger tips
In between the sheets she slips
Neath eclipse
As it seems
Wait ! before she's fairly sleeping
You shall see the laughter creeping
Round the tiny mouth and peeping
As in keeping
With her dreams.

And when night has turned to day
And the early sunbeams play
On the cloudy mists and gray
Far away
O'er the hills
If you hear the ringing sound
Of a laugh that echoes round
Till the robin's note is drowned
I'll be bound
That it's Lil's.

CHILD-THOUGHTS.

When I was little, and the hand of Death
My comrades snatched away,
I chose some larger, clearer-shining star,
Out of the bright array,
And, "There," I said, "henceforth, their home shall be,
There shall they wait, thence shall they smile on me."

So now, at night, when on my sleepless eyes
The heavenly pageant breaks,
That gracious fancy of the past remains,
Thought sleeps, while memory wakes,
And "Here," I say, "uprises Nellie's star,
There, Arthur smiles upon me from afar."

NO-YOU-DONT AND YES-YOU-MAY.

It's no good saying I will or I won't
In the gloomy country of NO-YOU-DON'T,
Where the things you want to do, you can't,
And every shall is met with a shan't.

The fruit hangs ripe—just out of your reach ;
There's the loveliest sea—with a tin-tack beach ;
Thousands of cakes—each shut in a box
With iron bars and a dozen locks.

There are birds—that peck if you touch their perch ;
Wonderful forests—of cane and of birch ;
Creams and ices—as hard as corals ;
Story-books—filled to the edge with morals.

Far away, and far away,
Is the beautiful city of YES-YOU-MAY.
By day and by night its skies are clear,
And the sunshine gladdens it through the year.

All that you long for, comes at once ;
The tears are dried on the face of the dunce ;
He goes to bed, and why should he weep ?
His lessons are learned while he's sound asleep.

You sow the seed in the garden bare,
Next morning the flowers are blooming there.
You plant the trees ; ere a week be past,
Apple or pear will be ripening fast.

The doors of the shop stand open wide,
All that you do is to step inside,
No one to hinder, nothing to pay,
You take what you like, and you go your way.

Every bird and beast and fish,
Is ready to do whatever you wish ;
Even the lion drops on his knees,
And roars with a smile, "Will you ride on me, please." ?

Beautiful city of YES-YOU-MAY,
"Could I but find it!" I hear you say,
Ah, my child, I'm afraid you won't
Till you've toiled through the country of NO-YOU-DON'T

A CHILD OF THE CITY,

Not only where she spreads unseen
Her mantle of perpetual green,
And casts into its ample fold
The daisy's snow, the kingcup's gold,
Not only there, does Nature find
Her little lords of humankind,
In whom, though all compact of earth,
She marks the signs of kingly birth,
For whom she lifts with smiling face
The veil that screens her Holiest Place,
And shows the hidden things that lie
Far from the uninitiate eye.

Not only there. The narrow street
Worn by the tramp of countless feet,
The tavern lights that put to shame
The lamp-post with its flickering flame,
The dismal yard with railings round,
Like some deserted burial-ground,
And one gaunt tree that flings on high
Long arms outstretched in agony,
Such was the scene that filled with joy
The heart of one small city boy.

For sometimes when the smoky pall
Was riven, what rapture would enthrall
His heart, as looking up and through
He saw the clear celestial blue,
And felt the shimmering beams of light
Which made that handbreadth infinite,
And when, the spring being in the land,
He watched the swelling buds expand,
For every leaf he had a name,
He knew from what far land they came,
And heard the welcome given to them
By sturdy trunk and tapering stem.

But best of all he loved the nights,
The frosty air, the sparkling lights,
They grew familiar to his eye,

And earth was far, and heaven was nigh.
He watched the mighty pageant sweep
Across the sky, too rapt for sleep.
For him the void and starry spaces
Opened their arms in heavenly places.
From jewelled bulwarks, rung by rung,
For him a shining ladder swung.
With nimble feet he climbed the stair,
And breathed a finer, purer air.
With every breath new life began,
Like fire through all his veins it ran.
The worlds rushed past him swift and strong,
The sons of God with shout and song.
His feet were shod with swiftness too,
Great winds upbore him as he flew
Along the highways of the sky
He knew not where, he knew not why,
He only knew that life was joy,
And life was his.

Thrice-happy boy,
Who saw the glory through the cloud,
And heard the voice exceeding loud,
While our dull senses stopped with clay,
Pass both, unheeding, every day.

A LITTLE GIRL DYING.

Like some large flower that bends its head and sways,
Too heavy for the slight and yielding stem,
Her head drooped on the pillow, whence the gaze
Of her large eyes met mine ; I read in them

Some thought unspoken. Did she shrink in fear
Of the dark valley ? Nay, for rod and staff
Were hers. I bowed my head the words to hear :
“ *Please bring a book,*” she said, “ *to make me laugh.*”

O spark divine, that canst inform with power
The feeble flutterings of this mortal breath,
Shine clear and strong, that in the appointed hour
I, too, may smile into the face of Death !

DEATH AND THE BOY.

DEATH.

Whither away, dear boy ?
Whom dost thou follow with those flying feet ?

THE BOY.

Life calls, and hope, and joy ;
O stay me not, they run so fleet, so fleet.
Look how they beckon ! See
That smile ! Ah, shining ones, will ye not wait ?
What shadow falls on me ?
Is it the sunset ? Can it be so late ?
I thought 'twas not yet noon.
Art *thou* the shadow ? Wherefore dost thou keep
Thy face all hidden ?

DEATH.

Soon

Thou shalt behold me ; now is time to sleep.

THE BOY.

Sleep, and the race half-run ?
Then I shall lose them. Tell me, have they fled ?

DEATH.

Nay, for the race is won,
Here they stand smiling, round this grassy bed.

THE ANGELS' WRATH.

Through the streets of the city, the bride of God,
The guardian angels go,
And their faces are glad, for over them pass
No shadows of human woe.

The rolling worlds are beneath them spread,
And open to their ken,
Their eyes look forth from morn to night
On the ways of the sons of men.

They see the folly, they mark the sin,
They hear the cry of despair,
But they turn their eyes on the face of God,
And rejoice for the love that is there.

Yet once and again do the angel brows
Grow dark with the passion of ire,
And the tranquil depths of their tearless eyes
Are lit as by lightning fire.

And stern in their terrible wrath they stand,
Who seemed so calm and mild,
The two-edged swords leap forth to slay,
When a wrong is done to a child.

And ill it were for the felon soul
If their feet should pass the gate,
And their ears should miss the still, small voice
That bids them pause and wait.

THE FOREST LIFE.

Not in the chilly regions of the North,
Not under ashen skies and drifting clouds
Full-charged with bitter blight of snow and hail,
Not where the icy winds and mournful rains
Breed barrenness, not there does man behold
The face of Nature, look into her eyes,
Feel her warm breath upon his cheek, and know
The universal mother of the race.
But here, where the great sun is lord indeed,
And strides across his fields of quivering blue,
Exulting in his strength, and bathes at eve
In seas as blue, here, Nature rends her veil.

The air is very still, a silence holds
The waiting earth ; the birds with folded wing
Sit voiceless ; the great beasts that prowl and prey
Lie panting in their dens, wherefore I know
It is high noon upon the open plain.

High noon and blazing sunlight on the plain
Yet here I sit within my solemn shrine
In a dim twilight. All around me rise
The pillars of my temple, ancient palms
That thrust their giant heads towards the light
And rain the blessed shadows at their feet.

The long lianas clasp their naked trunks
Like carven scroll-work, breaking into bud.
The waxen orchids hold their chalices
Still wet with dew. The dusty distances
Are starred with splendour. Stately aloes wear
Their golden crowns on high, the plantains lift
Their scarlet sceptres, while by yonder pool
Like turbaned sentinels, white lilies stand,

The hours pass by, long, happy, languorous hours
Of meditation and of restful sleep.
The sapphire glimpses overhead are gone.
A deeper darkness falls. The scented winds
Of night begin to stir the jungle grass.

The dew falls cold upon the earth whence rise
Keen, pungent odours. Hark ! the gentle notes
Of shy night-singers. Soon the chorus swells,
Innumerable insects buzz and chirp.
The tree frogs whistle softly, while far off
Roll the long echoes of a savage roar.

The living voices call me and I go,
On to the deeps. Through every nerve and vein
Thrills the intoxicating joy of life,
I am a freeman of this commonwealth
Whose franchise is the power to breathe. Green leaves
That touch me with a dumb caress, ye share
With me the incommunicable gift
That lifts us from the clod. My roots, like yours
Are in the teeming earth.

Look up above,
Eyes of my soul ! for in this open space
The purple lustre of heaven's canopy
Stoops to the earth, till the clear-shining stars
Gleam on the tree tops like the sparkling dew
Upon the grass blades when the morning beams
Fall slant ; they too are of our fellowship.

But see ! a rosy flush upon the dark.
The stars grow pale, a strange and solemn light
Streams from the full orb of the rising moon.
The forest murmur sinks, the birds sing low,
As higher still she climbs towards the throne
Deserted by the tyrant of the day.

Ah, the white witchcraft ! for another world
Of unimagined beauty fills the eye
And wins the heart to rapture. All I saw
With wonder in the sunshine's glare and glow,
I now behold with love. O God ! how full
Of young, quick-pulsing life, fresh from its source,
Is this old world. How fair a kingdom spreads
For one to rule whose larger faculties
Can trace the law of love that guides the path
Alike of primal cell and rolling sphere.

The trees that war so fiercely for the light,
Creatures that ravin, poisonous herbs that stand
Armed for the forest warfare, these fulfil
In blindness their appointed destiny,
Waiting perforce the hour when love shall come
And touch their eyes. Yet even now they know
The footsteps of his messengers, and pay
Their willing homage. Wheresoe'er I move
Through this wide forest world, I find no foe.
The very cactus thorns are kind to me,
And turn their weapons from my naked flesh.
The stealthy tiger snarls and bares his fangs
Then baulks his hungry spring, and to my feet
Creeps fawning. Flame-eyed serpents coiled to strike
Drop from the boughs and cling around my limbs
Splendid and terrible, yet harmless too,
Feeling the love they cannot understand.

Therefore, though still remembering the claims
And joys of human kinship, I have left
The company of men to dwell alone.
For when the thought of all-pervading love
Took root within me, suddenly there rose
A cloud across my heaven. Everywhere
I saw grim Hate enthroned and glorified
With man to man, and class to class opposed,
Nation to kindred nation, race to race,
Not ignorantly, as these forest foes,
But open-eyed and boastful. Here at least
The primal instincts wear their proper guise
Nor masquerade as virtues. Love can work
Its miracles unhindered by a brain
That has outgrown the heart. Amid the din
Of thronging crowds I heard the voiceless cry
Of life beneath, and my unwilling feet
Obedyed the strong compulsion of that call
Which led me to this happy life apart.

Here, brooding oft in solitary thought,
Long vistas of the future stretch, wherein
I see this forest life in all its forms
So strong, so beautiful, persisting still,

And still advancing as the ages pass
In secular procession, till at length
It lifts the burden of our conscious thought
And meets new foes, and learns on many a field
The cost of victory, marching none the less
To triumphs only seen in visions yet,
Such visions as forecast that blessed day
When love that sways the universe shall find
Its full expression in the heart of man.

HAWARDEN.

(May 19th, 1898).

The pageant of the noonday nears its end,
The trembling light deserts the sombre sky,
A wind comes wailing, the tall tree-tops bend,
And the chill raindrops patter ceaselessly.
Ah, sad it is to see her die.
The bright May morn that sprang so fresh and fair,
Flowers in her hands, upon her face the glow
Of radiant summer, blithe and debonair.
The tide is ebbing, and the lights are low.

Darkness and quiet over all the land.
Then suddenly a carol from the height
Pale-fingered comes the dawn and lays her hand
Upon the dusky curtains of the night,
And lo ! far off, the welcome light
Unseen, but heralded by that glad strain,
Walks on the waters. Clear, and clearer grow
The shrouded forms. Why then this sad refrain ?
The tide is ebbing, and the lights are low.

Nay, look above ; the tender twilight gray
Takes on her mantle of celestial blue,
Beneath your feet the very ground is gay
With firmaments of blossom opening new
Their cups of azure-tinctured hue,
The singing birds ascend their thrones of green
The garden flowers their flaunting petals show,
On field and lawn there falls the golden sheen.
The tide is ebbing, and the lights are low.

What tide ? What lights ? O ye who meekly take
The lower place in this large home of ours,
Claiming our love for your dear Father's sake,
Your elder brother has, for all his powers
A heavier burden, darker hours.
He sees with clearer vision, but his eyes
Are hot with tears ; to him is given to know,
Yet knowledge is but sorrow in disguise.
The tide is ebbing, and the lights are low.

See where yon climber with its flower-crowned sprays
Leans to the opened window. In that room
He lies who passed the span of mortal days
By many a happy year, yet cloud and gloom
Pursued him, and the steps of doom.
For gifts, he had the things men most desire,
Strength, honour in the eyes of friend and foe,
Wealth, and success, and genius' mystic fire.
The tide is ebbing, and the lights are low.

With steadfast and unconquerable will
He schooled his feet to tread the path severe.
The narrow path which scales that frowning hill
Where virgin Duty sits, white-robed, austere,
Voicing her summons clarion-clear.
The awful music in his ear became
Sweeter than melodies that softly flow,
His watchwords were a call, a cry, a Name.
The tide is ebbing, and the lights are low.

That call he heard in the fresh days of youth,
And ever as the hurrying years went by
His quick, responsive heart was wrung with ruth
Hearing the anguished, inarticulate cry
Of poor, oppressed humanity.
White-hot the stone from heaven's high altar borne
Touching his lips, till that dumb wail of woe
Leapt heavenward, clothed in words of wrath and scorn.
The tide is ebbing, and the lights are low.

Deep in his heart as in a secret shrine
An altar stood, the altar of the Name,
There burned the fire kindled by breath Divine,
And thither constantly the watcher came
To tend and guard the sacred flame.
Brighter it glowed for all the weight of years
And pangs the bodily frame must undergo,
Consuming fond regrets, and natural fears.
The tide is ebbing, and the lights are low.

Dark is the shrine, the altar broken down,
The fire extinguished, cold the watcher's hand,
The noble words, the deeds of high renown
All numbered with their works who silent stand,

The storied heroes of our land.
In the wan light of this new day it seems
A poorer world, where, strutting to and fro,
We play our little parts, and dream our dreams.
The tide is ebbing, and the lights are low.

Yet leave him not to rest beneath the sod,
He loved so, in that haven of repose,
The garden of his dead and of his God,
Where through the summer days his own white rose
Her perfect beauty might disclose,
And every season bring its offering due,
Till winter spread her folds of stainless snow,
And spring with hastening foot make all things new
The tide is ebbing, and the lights are low.

No, rest is for the weary and the sad,
Fettered, and caged, and longing for release,
He has no more the need that once he had
When, racked by pain within his shrine of peace
He saw his measured days decrease,
And bowed his head, and prayed for death to speed.
His Master heard, and hastened to bestow
Not death, but life from all its burdens freed.
The tide is ebbing, and the lights are low.

So lay him for a sign, where England's heart
Throbs loudest, 'mid the burden and the heat
Of that great strife wherein he bore his part
Unspoiled by victory, dauntless in defeat,
His lesson learned, his work complete.
There where the marble silences recall
The memories of the men of long ago,
There leave him with our heroes, chief of all.
The tide is out, the lights are burning low.

He has embarked on that unfathomed sea
Whose sullen waters chill the heart of man,
In cloud and mystery must his passing be,
Such cloud as lowered when first his eyes began
Our unfamiliar world to scan.
Sail on, good ship with all thy canvas spread,
The ebbing tide is gathering to the flow,
Before thee lies the land where Death is dead.
High tide, full tide, and all the lights aglow.

ON THE DEATH OF TWIN BROTHERS.

(Cudworth, January 21st, 1905

So brief a span of life on earth,
So scant a draught of mortal breath,
Together through the gates of birth,
Together to the veil of death.

But lo ! beyond, a fuller breath
Of life upon a lovelier earth.
Together through the veil of death
Together to the gates of birth.



UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA LIBRARY

Los Angeles

This book is DUE on the last date stamped below.

PR	Neuman -
5103	Pro patria
N381p	



PR
5103
N381p

